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U. S. Department of Agriculture

THE GARDEN CALENDAR

A radio discussion prepared by W. R. Beattie, Bureau of Plant Industry, delivered by Ken Gapen in the Department of Agriculture period of the National Farm and Home Hour, over a network of 50 associate NBC radio stations, Thursday, August 22, 1935.

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Today our Garden Calendar specialist, Mr. W. R. Beattie, is attending the annual convention of the National Vegetable Growers Association at Hartford, Connecticut. Once a year the vegetable growers from all over the United States and Canada get together for a grand roundup and exchange of information, and a discussion of the best methods of producing and marketing vegetables. These annual meetings of the vegetable growers are held in different parts of the country. Last year the convention was held at Toronto, Canada, and this year it is at Hartford, Connecticut.

The Vegetable Growers Association of America was organized at Cleveland, Ohio, in 1908, and annual conventions have been held every year since its organization with the exception of 1918, the war year. That year the vegetable growers were working shorthanded, because so many of their boys were in the army, and everybody was doing their utmost to produce food. Mr. Beattie was secretary of this national organization for a number of years and while not now an officer in the association, he is always present at the meetings and will doubtless return from Hartford with some choice morsels of garden information to pass on to you.

It is surprising how many people are depending very much upon vegetables in their diet nowadays. And Mr. Beattie and Miss Van Deman are kept busy digging up information on the production and uses of vegetables, fruits, nuts, etc., and passing this information on to you over the radio, by sending you bulletins, and answering your thousands of letters asking for information. If there is a solution to your household or garden problem, Miss Van Deman and Mr. Beattie will find it for you and they have the resources of the entire Department of Agriculture to draw upon.

In leaving for his little trip to Connecticut this week, Mr. Beattie reminded me that this is about the very last call for planting the late white potatoes in the southern part of the country. And in case the seed potatoes are taken out of cold storage, they should be spread out where they will get the air, and will warm up for a few days before you plant them. There is something about placing those chilled seed potatoes in the very warm ground that often causes them to fail to grow.

Potato digging and marketing is going on in the middle northern sections. And here is a suggestion about harvesting potatoes during this hot weather. If exposed to the hot sun for any length of time, the potatoes will scald, and when stored, even for a short time in baskets or barrels, they are liable to rot. For this reason the potatoes should be dug very early in the morning, before the sun gets hot, and picked up and taken to the shade just as soon as possible.

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Potato digging in the northern sections will not begin for some time, or until cool weather sets in, so that there is little danger of sunscalding in the late or main-crop potato sections.

Mr. Beattie asked me to remind you southern folks once more that it is time you should arrange for or fix up proper storage for your sweet potatoes. If you put off this work until time to dig the potatoes, and don't have the old sweetpotato storage house repaired, or a new one built, you are liable to lose a part of your crop. Just a loft up over the kitchen is a pretty good place to store the home supply of sweets, provided it is well ventilated.

In the northern sections, the planting of garden vegetables is about over for this season, except fall spinach, lettuce, kale and turnips may still be grown in many sections. In the main this is the time of the year for the northern gardener to be thinking about canning and storing as much as possible from his garden, and that reminds me, that the Department has a very good bulletin on the Home Storage of Vegetables. It is Farmers' Bulletin No. 8-7-9, and it is a companion bulletin to Farmers' Bulletin No. 1-4-7-1 on Canning Fruits and Vegetables at Home. Well, that's what the Department Garden Advisor asked me to relay to you for him.

We trust that Mr. Beattie, and Mrs. Beattie, who is with him, are having a pleasant time attending the vegetable growers convention this week, and we will expect a report when they return.

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